1: Conzemius M-4, 5 (1921) 1932
SA15 Mosquito SA15



342 Before starting with the construction of a house the Indians cut down all the bush and clear the ground around the site. All the big trees which are liable to endanger the house in case of storms are felled. 364 Refuse is thrown into the water; pigs, dogs, and vultures act to some extent as scavengers. Crude brooms are made from various low 412 shrubs or from the fan-shaped leaves of several species of *Acanthorhiza* palms.

TYPE OF HOUSES.—Both tribes construct rectangular dwellings 342 (M.: *utla;* S.: *o, u*), which are generally rounded on the short sides in the shape of a semicircle; in recent years the regular oblong form has become more common. Among the Miskito of Honduras the elliptical and the circular type are also found.

BUILDING MATERIAL.—No remains of stone houses have been discovered in this area. The dwellings of these primitive tribes are built of perishable material. They consist of four hardwood posts (M.: *playa;* S.: *kal, rahni*) supporting a sharply sloping, well-thatched palm-leaf roof (M.: *bahna;* S.: *tun*). The eaves of the latter reach to within 4 feet from the ground, so that one has to stoop in order to get into the interior. In the primitive Sumu hut there were also one or more central posts (M.: *masa;* S.: *tun rahni*) which were generally elaborately carved. The posts are generally of ironwood (*Dialium* sp.), sapodilla (*Sapota zapotilla* Coville) or cortés (*Tecoma chrysantha* DC.). Several varieties of palms, as the cohune (*Attalea cohune*), skomphra, col de gallo or suita (*Calyptrogyne sarapiquensis*), and caña danta (*Geonoma* sp.) furnish the leaves for thatching. The latter work is made very carefully and a well-made roof lasts from 6 to 10 years without needing any repair. No nails are employed in the construction of the hut, the various parts being held together with strong lianas.

ATTIC.—Most houses are provided with a sort of cockloft, or rude attic, which is immediately under the roof. It is called *tint* by both tribes, perhaps after the English "tent." It is formed by laying split bamboo across the beams, about 7 feet from the ground. Ascent to it is made by means of a tree-ladder (M.: *mina-mañka, yaman-mañka;* S.: *kalana*), consisting of a tree trunk wherein notches have been cut. Food is stored in the attic; it is also used as a sleeping apartment.

FIREPLACE.—The fire is made on the leveled mud floor, which is 354 often raised a little to avoid dampness. The hearth (M.: *pāuta-wihta;* T.: *kuh-nanañ;* P.: *koh-pani;* U.: *kuh-suruka*) is formed by three logs which are placed so as to form a "Y"; they do not quite touch each other, however, but there is a free space between them, where the fire is made. These three logs (M.: *pāuta yuñk;* S.: *kuh-karan, koh suru*) support the cooking vessels; as the projecting ends burn gradually away, these logs have to be pushed forward